

Proposal of a new standard for the nutritional assessment of pregnant women

Propuesta de un nuevo estándar de evaluación nutricional en embarazadas

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Background: There is evidence to suggest that the criteria for nutritional assessment of pregnant women, used by the Chilean Ministry of Health, overestimates nutritional disturbances. **Aim:** To propose a new reference table to assess the nutritional status of pregnant women, based on body mass index. **Material and methods:** The table was theoretically defined using criteria for normality proposed by FAO and the weight increase during pregnancy that is associated with a lower maternal and fetal morbidity and mortality. In 665 pregnant women, weight, height, mid arm circumference and skinfolds were measured using standard techniques. Body mass index, arm fat and muscle area and percentage of body fat were calculated. Body composition for each nutritional category, derived from the body mass index or "Rosso-Mardones classification", was analyzed. **Results:** According to the new table, under weight women had lower percentage of body fat and mid arm circumference and overweight women had higher